



Coconino County Sheriff's Office

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Gerry Blair 928-226-5089

Seventy-Three Year Old Man Survives Helicopter Crash

Flagstaff, AZ – A 73 year old resident of a community located south of Flagstaff, who is a private helicopter pilot walked away from a forced landing in a heavily wooded area early this morning. According to Donald Schwartz of Forest Highlands, he departed the Pulliam Airport on Friday July 28, 2006 at approximately 5:50 AM. At approximately 6:05 AM the pilot encountered weather related issues to include a low cloud ceiling and heavy fog. He experienced difficulties when attempting to gain altitude as he approached a forested knoll.

Mr. Schwartz was forced to land in a heavily wooded area located approximately ½ mile west of Interstate Highway 17 in close proximity to the Willard Springs Exit. The Aircraft Emergency Locator Signal was activated upon impact. Mr. Schwartz was able to free himself from the wreckage and searched the crash site until he found his cell phone.

The pilot called law enforcement for assistance. It was difficult for ground units to access the crash site, due to the extreme nature of the terrain. The Arizona Department of Public Safety Air Rescue Helicopter responded to the scene and transported the victim to safety.



Deputies of the Coconino County Sheriff's Office, interviewed Mr. Schwartz at the Flagstaff Pulliam Airport. Mr. Schwartz sustained minor injuries to include abrasions and contusions, as a result of the impact. He declined transport to the Flagstaff Medical Center. The aircraft Mr. Schwartz was piloting is a 2006 Robinson four seat helicopter.